

A previously unpublished drawing by John Gould and H. C. Richter

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One of the great patrons of natural history during the first half of the nineteenth century was the XIIIth Earl of Derby, President of the Linnaean Society from 1828 to 1834 and of the Zoological Society of London from 1831 until his death in 1851. At Knowsley Hall, his family seat near Liverpool, he amassed a huge collection of specimens, books and works of art on natural history subjects. To illustrate his collections, he employed several outstanding artists of the time – most notably the “nonsense poet” Edward Lear, who was also tutor to his children.

Lord Derby was particularly supportive of the collection of natural history material in Australia, mainly due to his friendship with the artist and naturalist John Gould. The Earl not only subscribed to all Gould's published works but purchased a significant proportion of the specimens Gould procured, whether himself, from his assistant John Gilbert, or as an agent from other sources. In 1851, Derby bequeathed all his specimens to the city of Liverpool and these are now part of the collections of the Liverpool Museum (National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside). His library, however, remains at Knowsley Hall under the care of the XVIIIth Earl of Derby and the librarian, Mrs Iris Young.

Apart from an almost complete set of Gould's published works – which are in pristine condition – the XIIIth Earl's library includes many original sketches and illustrations by famous artists of the time, such as Lear, Waterhouse Hawkins, Richter and Gould. Most of these are bound together in large volumes and many are the originals of plates in various contemporary monographs and publications. Two bound volumes contain “Original drawings of Gould and Richter”; volume one consisting of illustrations for the “*Birds of Australia*” (1848). Some of these differ in varying degrees from the final plate and, in a few instances, were entirely changed prior to publication.

The second volume includes just one drawing of an Australian species; this is plate 119, which is a picture of the heads of two Great Red Kangaroos. The picture is signed “Richter del” and labelled “Old Male and Young Male *Marcropus laniger* from Life” (cover). This indicates that Henry Constantine Richter (1821-1902, a fine artist employed by Gould after the death of his wife, who had previously acted as her husband's chief assistant), was responsible for the finished drawing and final plate. However, in most cases he worked from basic sketches and colour plans provided by John Gould, as did most of Gould's assistant artists.

The Great Red Kangaroo is represented by two plates in Gould's “*Mammals of Australia*” (1863, volume

2, plates 6 and 7). Plate 6 is an illustration of a single kangaroo head in profile facing left (Fig. 1), whilst plate 7 is a landscape depicting a family of four kangaroos. The species is represented in the “*Monograph of the Macropodidae*” (1842), Gould's only other published collection illustrating kangaroos, by another landscape. The original sketch for the latter plate is also at Knowsley, in a bound volume entitled “*Australian Animals – original drawings by Gould and Richter*”.

Plate 119 was, therefore, never used by Gould in any of his printed works and is thus previously unpublished. It is interesting, however, that the delightful pose in this picture obviously appealed to Gould, as he reproduced it exactly for the plate of the Black Wallaroo in “*Mammals of Australia*” (volume 2, plate 10). This, however, is entitled “Head of Male and of a Female, life size” (Fig. 2).

Several other original sketches at Knowsley, including one of the Pig-footed Bandicoot, *Chaeropus ecaudatus*, do not appear to have been published. This article is intended to be the first of a short series of notes on previously unknown Gould drawings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to the present Earl of Derby for permission to publish this plate and for the provision of facilities at the Knowsley Hall Library. Thanks are also due to Mrs Iris Young for her very able assistance.

The plates were photographed by David Flower, of the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside's Department of Design and Production. I am indebted to him for the time he has spent at Knowsley preparing illustrations for this and other manuscripts.

REFERENCES

- Gould, J., 1842. *A monograph of the Macropodidae, or family of kangaroos*. Published by the author, London.
- Gould, J., 1848. *The birds of Australia*, 7 vols. Published by the author, London.
- Gould, J., 1863. *Mammals of Australia*, 3 vols. Published by the author, London.

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COVER PHOTO: "Old Male and Young Male *Macropus laniger* from Life", a previously unpublished picture of Great Red Kangaroos by John Gould and H. C. Richter.

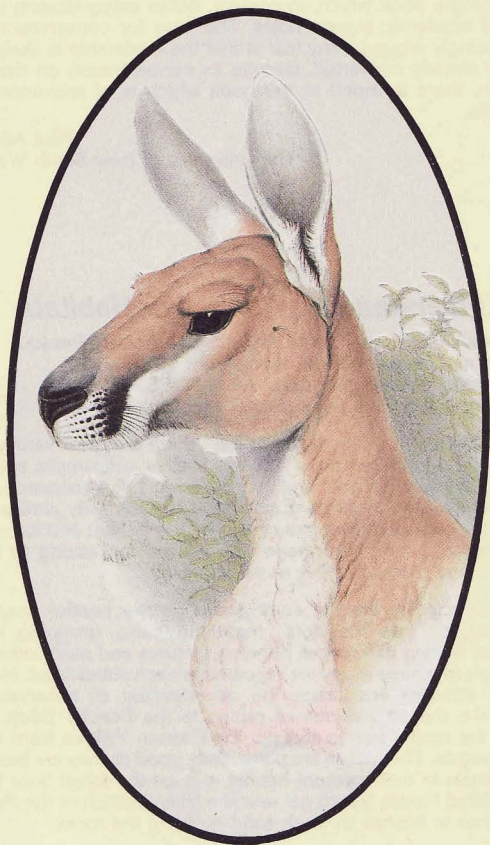


FIGURE 1: Head of the Great Red Kangaroo, by John Gould and H. C. Richter (*"Mammals of Australia"*, vol. 2, pl. 6).



FIGURE 2: "Head of Male and of a Female, life size", depicting the Black Wallaroo, by John Gould and H. C. Richter (*"Mammals of Australia"*, vol. 2, pl. 10.). This pose is identical to that in the unpublished picture of the Great Red Kangaroos.